

Now, we do not insert this letter as agreeing with the statement in it, our own experience contradicts it completely, but as a timely hint to the excellent official referees to use much despatch as may be to simplify their proceedings, and to aid in rendering clear the intention of the Act. To ask them to see every gentleman who called in Trafalgar-square to make an inquiry, would, however, be a very foolish request on the part of those who wish them to get quickly through their business. At present every thing is new, and requires more deliberation than will hereafter be necessary. The difficulty in the way of obtaining information, too, will be very much lessened in a short time, as every case decided by the referees is fully recorded, and will be made accessible on payment of some small charge, perhaps sixpence.

A PAPER ON MONUMENTS AND NATIONAL MAUSOLEA.

THE corpse of the Gothic king Alaric was laid in the bed of the river Busentinus, in a sepulchre adorned with spoils of vanquished Rome. The stream had been diverted by the labour of the captives, afterwards murdered, that the place of burial might remain concealed. And it seems well that no visible monument should mark the grave of him, who spread rapine and bloodshed through the whole of Italy. The body of the barbarian Attila was inclosed in coffins of gold, of silver, and of iron; spoils of conquered nations were thrown into the grave, and the prisoners who had opened the ground were massacred. But we, in later times, delight to honour the virtues which accelerate, rather than the vices which retard the progress of civilization. Our poets, artists, and philosophers, have bequeathed to us living monuments, in works which, like the waves circling on the pool, will continue to undulate, in effect, on the ocean of time, long subsequent to the earlier and more sensible agitation. The works of Homer, of Raphael, of Newton, are their best monuments, and all have concurred in praising the peculiar appositeness of that epitaph so well known to architects, which in the words, "Lector si monumentum requiris, circumspice," points to the self-created monument of a great artist.

But, if by the evidence of a monument, and an appropriate epitaph, we can evince our gratitude for benefits conferred, and thus, by publishing that efforts are appreciated, stimulate emulation in others; if it be merely a delight to honour the memory of the departed great, to be reminded that they had "senses, affections, passions," like ourselves, we should foster these pleasurable emotions with such tangible record. The monuments of the dead are the most interesting records which one age can hand down to another; they exist while temple and dwelling alike moulder, and disappear, reflecting on succeeding ages the manners and habits of their originators, and the memory of great names and noble deeds. The name of Watt will live long as England's arts shall flourish, yet do we look with pride and pleasure on the monument to that lofty genius which made England great among the nations. Let us, therefore, grant that this homage to the names of our illustrious men is, if not the vital principle, at least an important function in the matter of our progress, and now call to mind in what manner we have executed the duty.

Monuments may be classed, according to their distinctive objects and characteristics, as religious or "ecclesiastical," and civil, or as monuments to the dead and to the living. In the first category should be included all such as are placed in churches, and tombs or erections over the grave of the departed, in which the design should be conducive to all that may draw the mind of the beholder to thoughts of virtue and immortality. In contradistinction to these are such as direct an honourable ambition to paths where fame awaits the philanthropist, the discoverer, and the defender of his country. Each description of testamentary monument requires a distinct mode of treatment, which must also be considered in reference to the intended locale. Of all styles of monu-

mental design, none observe the rules of propriety so strictly as the Gothic; they have all a devotional character, and, until the later period of decline in the art, are devoid of allusion to earthly honours and achievements. But up to the present moment in modern times, we have entirely disregarded these obvious canons of art, repeating the same gods and goddesses in the cathedral and the public square, and altogether shutting out a style of design which would present to modern sculptors, from its comparative novelty alone, a fertile source for invention, and a greater scope of design in a right channel, than the mythology and far-fetched allegory to which they have hitherto restricted themselves.

Whoever has examined the images in our Gothic cathedrals, will have been struck with their peculiar form and impress. Their attitudes, the folds of their drapery, their whole execution and design, bear an assimilation to the character of the edifices, of which they are part. The smaller decorations of the capital or the boss often show great grotesqueness of fancy, and pliancy of curvature, but the larger figures, which partake less of detail, and more of the general effect, have an expression of stability in accordance with that of the mass. In all points these are strictly architectural; the crusader rests in unbroken sleep, recumbent on the lombardine, the saint stands erect in solemn meditation. In other styles of architecture, we find not an equal propriety of design. It is forgotten that sculpture is for the most part seen in connection with architecture: it should be subservient to it whenever the arts are employed together.

The sculptures on the fronts of Grecian temples, faultless as they are in themselves, have less of accordance with that motionless character, if we may thus apply the term, which the Grecian style, more than any other, presents. The centaurs, in violent contest with the Lapithæ, are hurling huge rocks at their opponents, whilst women, with fluttering garments, are flying from the scene of action. In the Panathænic procession in the Parthenon, the horses bound with their riders; and no one can look at this fine frieze, without feeling the impression of motion in the actual marble before him, most powerfully depicted in his mind. During two thousand years these sculptures have remained unsurpassed, and it may seem little short of hypercriticism to question in any respect their propriety as works of art. In the buildings of the later Italians, we find statues beautiful, perhaps, if they could be viewed apart from the edifices which they are designed to decorate; but, placed in a niche or a pediment, they are entirely out of keeping with the building. Palladio, in his designs, has given figures with extended arms and distorted attitudes, and Wren himself, in his statues on St. Paul's, has shewn some want of the architectural character for which we contend.

Westminster Abbey is inferior to several of our cathedrals in its exterior effect, but is surpassed by none in the majesty of its interior. While, as we shall presently shew, its architecture has suffered, it has yet all but escaped the greatest opponent to architectural beauty, alike delighted in by the country churchwarden and the improving rector—the detestable whitewash. As we have before said, it would be infinitely better to do nothing in the way of repairs than to convert beautifully foliated capitals into shapeless knobs, by repeated colourings and whitewashings, of which we could name a hundred instances—of others, in which the whole character of a church has been destroyed by absurd attempts at improvement. It is scarcely too much to say, that what the Protestants did in the sixteenth century, and the Puritans in the seventeenth, the restorers and improvers of Gothic edifices have again done—with no religious zeal to extenuate—in the nineteenth. We must hope that the English Government may follow the example of those of other countries, and preserve the still existing relics from decay.

* That talented architect, Mr. William Chambers, speaking of statues on a building, has said, "Their attitudes must be upright, or, if any thing, bending a little forwards, but never inclined to either side. Their legs must be close to each other, and the draperies close to their bodies; for whenever they stand straddling, with bodies tortured into a variety of bends, and draperies waving in the wind, as those placed on the colonnades of St. Peter's, they have a most disagreeable effect, especially at a distance; from whence they appear like lamps of unformed materials, ready to drop upon the heads of passers-by."

But to return to the abbey: huge monuments, in the styles prevalent during the reigns of Elizabeth and James, or before the art of sculpture had been created in England by Bacon and Flaxman, block up the aisles or the windows, whilst architectural decorations of surpassing beauty have been cut away, to make room for tasteless monuments to men unknown to the pages of history. In the east walk of the cloisters, over the door leading to the Record-office, may be seen the most beautiful bit of architecture which the abbey affords. Two brackets support mutilated figures of angels, and the third is thought to have borne a figure of the Virgin and child; the whole being surrounded with scroll-work of most beautiful design; but in the very centre of the composition a square tablet has been inserted. Of such barbarisms there are several hundred instances. The range of beautiful arches beneath the windows of the aisles, once enriched with colour and gilding, have almost disappeared, being replaced by tablets of the most objectionable character. Every part of the building is crowded; a huge figure of Watt nearly fills the chapel of St. Paul, a window in the south aisle is blocked up with a mountain of clouds; even the elegant chapel of Henry the Seventh is defaced. It is much to be deplored that the dean and chapter do not take it into their immediate and anxious consideration, whether some change in the disposition of the monuments may not be effected less detrimental to the fabric itself, and more conducive to the ends of monumental design. It has been suggested* that the chapter-house would be an appropriate place for some of the monuments, but we should deprecate any step, which would only remove the evil, and prevent the restoration of the building to the exact state in which it formerly existed. The triforium is sufficiently lofty for a large portion of the monuments; it is well lighted, and would, in our opinion, be the most desirable place. There is no architectural decoration which they would interfere with, and we urge that the advantages of this position be well considered. We have not had the opportunity of personal examination, but we believe that the height of the triforium is nearly 15 feet in the highest part, from which it takes the slope of the roof; it is lighted by the upper range of windows, and is, of course, the same width as the aisle, and has a good floor laid upon the groining. The monument to Wilberforce, an admirable work, though hardly adapted to its locality, is 9 feet high, including the pedestal, and the greater part of the objectionable works are much smaller. The monument to William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, is the largest in the abbey, reaching to the capitals of the piers; several others are near the same size, and for these another locality must be found, unless they are consigned to the lime burner, a way of getting rid of them, which, for ourselves, we should hardly regret. Whether some of them could be placed in St. Paul's, without injury to that edifice, or whether, as has been suggested is, a cloister could be built in Dean's-yard for their reception, is matter for very careful consideration; but we could well consent to their remaining as at present, if other monuments were removed.

From all we have said, it seems that an edifice in which monuments, not of a devotional character, may be erected to individuals, in commemoration of actual services, and of private or public worth, is urgently demanded. Mr. Barry has allotted a space in his design for the New House of Parliament, which, if devoted to the reception of monuments, as he suggests, will answer the object, provided the modern style of sculpture can be made to accord with that of the building. Some space might be got in Chelsea Hospital, and a sort of statues to great naval heroes might be advantageously placed in the colonnades of Greenwich Hospital. The terrace in front of Somerset-house, which must unaccountably be always closed to the public, might be made into a magnificent promenade, if thrown open, and enriched with appropriate works of sculpture.

In St. Paul's Cathedral the sculptures are nearly all well placed, and add to, instead of detracting from, the beauty of the building. They in part fulfil the intention of the archi-

* First by Mr. G. Godwin, in "Civil Engineer's Journal," 1813, and afterwards by Mr. Richard Westmacott, A.R.A.

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